

**"MADAM BUTTERFLY"**

Puccini's Opera Delights a Washington Audience.

**FIRST AMERICAN PRODUCTION**

A Critical Assemblage Suspended Judgment in the Earlier Scenes, but Finally Became Enthusiastic. The Work Has a Place of Its Own, Apart from Grand Opera.

A Washington audience had the pleasure and distinction last night at the Columbia Theater of witnessing the first production in America of Giacomo Puccini's music-drama on a Japanese theme, entitled in its English dress "Madam Butterfly." It is pleasant to be able to record that the event was no less successful artistically than it was notable in the annals of the local theater. It was the first time in Washington stage history that a musical work of the importance of "Madam Butterfly" received its introduction to America in this city, and it may be said that the audience which gathered to do honor to the occasion was thoroughly representative of the intelligence, culture, and fashion of the town. The Columbia Theater was well filled in every part, and the critical character of the assemblage was demonstrated by the evident suspension of judgment discernible in the earlier scenes, until the discovery of the work by the excellent company of vocal and instrumental artists gradually brought conviction of unusual merit in opera and in interpreters.

**Audience Shows Enthusiasm.**  
Then the audience gave way to unmistakable enthusiasm, and the success of Manager Henry W. Savage's ambitious and highly meritorious enterprise seemed reasonably assured, granting that the verdict of a Washington gathering is as decisive as managers appear, by their selection of this city as the scene of first presentations, to think it is. The fine climax at the end of the first act brought a pleasant triumph to the leading artists of the company, Mme. Szamosy and Mr. Sheehan, which they shared deservedly with the masterful conductor of the exceptionally fine orchestra, Mr. Walter H. Rothwell, to whose skillful work the success of the evening was in no small part due. Thereafter the production proceeded with frequent manifestations of the satisfaction and even delight of the audience. Steady improvement in the work of the entire ensemble of artists was notable, and altogether the premier of "Madam Butterfly" may be set down as distinctly notable for smoothness, style, and finish. The work of the orchestra occasioned general remark, and the young conductor was heartily congratulated before the acts by his friends, and shared with the leading vocalists the honors of the evening.

**A Daring Experiment.**

The story of "Madam Butterfly" is familiar to most readers. It is a daring experiment on the part of Puccini to attempt constructing on it an opera of pretensions. But he has done his work admirably and thoroughly, and there is no doubt it will win its way to a very large measure of affection among the music-lovers of America. In its operatic dress it is a delicate rose of simple beauty, and its music is of a lovely tenderness and glowing music. The story has been smothered in a luxuriant opulence of harmonic bloom and eclipses its rather slight dramatic interest, the danger that was to be feared turning it to operatic relief. It has been thrown into a charming and pathetic relief by the deft and delightful work of the composer, and comes forth as a work of rare musical and dramatic interest and attractiveness. It will not take rank with the grand operas of the great Italian or German school, but it will have its own honorable place in that distinctly modern form of music-drama, which Mascagni, Leon Cavello and Puccini are developing with such success. The music is light, airy, graceful, but of high merit. At times it has the exotic and fascinating flavor of the Japanese, but there is much less of this than might have been anticipated, considering the locale of the work. How boldly modern Puccini was brought home with a little shock of pleasure to the audience by the use of a few opening notes of "The Spangled Banner" in the motif of the American hero. And the librettist has not been less boldly modern in the introduction of the highest into the scene, in which Lieut. Pinkerton welcomes his friend, Sharpless, the American consul, to the new house he has purchased for his poor little Japanese bride on the hill overlooking the beautiful roadstead of Nagasaki.

Mme. Szamosy, as Cho-Cho-San, the Japanese bride, showed herself to be a delightful artist. Her voice, while not a great one, is of great command and quality, and she used it after overcoming the nervousness of the opening scenes with convincing effectiveness. She has the dramatic quality, and her acting was intelligent, vivacious, and captivating in the lighter scenes, and restrained and emotional in those where feeling was called for. Altogether, her Madame Butterfly is a most engaging and pathetic portrayal, and there can be little doubt she will speedily establish herself as a favorite on the American operatic stage. Mr. Sheehan, as the unworthy hero, sang with spirit and effectiveness, but he was not easy in his part. There is a certain constraint and hesitation in his acting that will no doubt wear away as he becomes better fitted into it. Mr. Richards, as Sharpless, gave a markedly good interpretation of the role. Miss Harriet Bohne was satisfactory as Suzuki, the nurse, and Mr. Jungman, as Gore, the marriage broker, injected some quiet Japanese comedy into an otherwise serious and minor roles were adequately filled, and the performance as a whole went off with quite unusual smoothness and briskness for a first night.

The setting that has been given to the opera by manager Savage leaves nothing to be desired. The stage pictures are in every detail artistic and charming. The audience is prepared for the Oriental locale of the story by the gradual rising of curtains revealing Japanese scenes, rich in color, and shifting light effects. Then the scene is disclosed of the hillside overlooking the bay of Nagasaki, dotted with vessels. "Madam Butterfly" will be repeated each evening and at two matinees at the Columbia Theater this week.

The Japanese Ambassador and Vice-consul Akaki occupied the box accompanied by the first secretary, Mr. Miyaka, Mrs. Miyaka, and other members of their staff.

Other well-known people in the audience included Rear Admiral and Mrs. Hemphill, Capt. and Mrs. Richard Wainwright and a party of friends, Commander and Mrs. Nathan Sargent, Medical Director and Mrs. W. S. Dixon, Dr. and Mrs. Maurice Francis Egan and the Misses Egan, Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Jones, Mrs. John P. Story, Mrs. Rush Wallace,

Miss Gale, Miss De Kraft, Mr. Justice and Mrs. White, Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Wainwright, Miss Hager, Miss Lederman, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Galt, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Neale, Mr. and Mrs. J. William Henry, Mr. and Mrs. V. G. Fischer, Mrs. Laura Jackson, and Mr. and Mrs. Carpenter.

**FRANCIS WILSON AT NATIONAL.****"The Mountain Climber" Scores a Repetition of Former Success.**

Francis Wilson's appearance at the National Theater last night in his latest season's success, "The Mountain Climber," was an excellent argument in support of his determination to forsake comic opera and enter the field of non-musical comedy. "The Mountain Climber" is in its second season, and with the exception of "Ermine"—which is inevitably associated in the mind with Mr. Wilson—the actor has found no vehicle to carry him so continuously to popularity. The farce, which is by Messrs. Kraatz and Neal, who were responsible for the original "Are You a Mason?" so palpably belongs to that school of foreign comedy in which the deceived wife, and the lying, but ever-ready husband, play conspicuous parts, that it would scarcely be more than mildly amusing, were it not for the many unmistakable Wilsonesque touches that are evident to the experienced playgoer. The quips and jokes with which Mr. Wilson has interlarded the lines, particularly his own, are precisely what make the part possible for him to play, and his manner of delivering the most telling of his speeches by advancing to the front of the stage and becoming confidential with the audience, hardly smacks of the field wherein he achieved his undying fame. In such moments one cannot help wishing "The Mountain Climber" were indeed a comic opera, and that Mr. Wilson would shortly oblige with a topical verse or two. The wish, however, does not hold. In view of the swift and dramatic action of the piece, which more than compensates for any slight absence of the usual Wilson surroundings.

In "The Mountain Climber" the spirit of burlesque prevails, and in Mr. Wilson and Miss May Robson, it finds apt interpretation. Mr. Wilson's comedy is not to claim to quiet dignity or subtle epigram; neither does delicate satire veil his efforts, yet in his broadest moments he never offends. Last night, responding to the clamor, he made a characteristic speech, which caught the fancy of the audience, and put them in even a better humor than his acting, were such a thing possible.

In May Robson, Mr. Wilson has the support of one of the most eminent character actresses of our stage. Indeed, at times Miss Robson's acting is emotional, and convincing to an extent not reached by many actresses who enjoy far wider reputations. As the wife who believes her husband to be a great Alpine climber, when he is nothing of the sort, Miss Robson is quite in her element, and in her gestures and her extravagances of speech, while extremely funny, kept rigidly within the bounds of probability.

The balance of Mr. Wilson's company is entirely satisfactory. Elsie Matson and Edna Bruns, as the step-daughters of Sibeby, the alleged mountain climber, formed a pretty look-alike for the more rugged Miss Robson, and Jane Gordon, as Lena, gave a genuine dash of local color to the Swiss scene in her interpretation of the jealous milkmaid. Joseph Allen gave his usual good ability to a good comedy role, and George Irving as the serious and genuine explorer, Arthur Lydbrook, and Sidney Rice, as an enthusiast, were excellent.

**"JULIE BONBON" HERE AGAIN.****Clara Lipman and Louis Mann Repeat Their Success at Belasco.**

A large audience greeted Louis Mann and Clara Lipman at the Belasco Theater last night, where they began a return engagement in this city in "Julie Bonbon," the play by Miss Lipman, which comes here again after a lengthy and successful run in New York.

The play is extremely interesting in narrative, involving the love affair of a little French milliner and a son of one of the

aristocratic families of Manhattan, and while the bulk of the fabric is pure comedy, there is considerable pathos and some clever character portraits. The story is the old and simple one, built upon the maxim about the course of true love never running smooth, but its simplicity is relieved by the interpolation of many interesting incidents, particularly in the third act, where the scene is laid in "Little Hungary," the famous Bohemian resort, affording a splendid background for the most dramatic scene of the play, when Jean Van Brunt, the wily and voluble Frenchwoman with having trifled with him.

The greatest interest of the performance centers in the impersonation of Julie Bonbon, by Miss Lipman. She endows the character with a charming personality, to which is added a delightful vein of comedy and a convincing portrayal of the emotional elements pertaining to the part. Mr. Louis Mann, as the wily and voluble character of Jean Van Brunt, the wily Frenchman of the empire, who is one of the chief causes of his daughter's sorrow. Aside from the amusement which he constantly invokes, it is extremely interesting study of temperment, habit and personal characteristics.

The principals are supported by a good company, including Robert Conner, as John Van Brunt, Miss Ida Lewis, as Mrs. Schuyler Van Brunt, and George Pannett, as John Stevens. Clever character work was introduced by Anthony Asher, as Schwartz, the proprietor of "Little Hungary," John Adolf, as the waiter, and Charles Clifton, as the misanthropic boy.

**High-class Vaudeville at Chase's.**

The work of the "Le Brun Grand Opera Trio" was a decided surprise to the patrons of Chase's yesterday afternoon. The vaudeville grand opera is not a treat to music lovers, but the greatest fault to be found with the scenes from "Il Trovatore," as presented yesterday, is that they were too short. Madame Le Brun possesses a light dramatic soprano voice, which she handles with admirable ease. James P. Stevens' Count de Luna was worthy of his part, and his baritone voice was used with ease and method, and his bearing on the stage might readily be envied by many grand opera singers who are really "grand."

Fritz N. Hadjioannou has a light tenor voice, but it is lacking in the quality which he possessed to such a marked degree by both Madame Le Brun and Mr. Stevens. John Hyams and Leila McIntyre proved a good combination. The latter sang a song entitled "Two Hundred Wives," which was both clever and humorous. Miss McIntyre suffers somewhat from some awkward mannerisms which mar her work, but she shows real talent as a comedienne, and her "Shame on You" song was one of the hits of the performance.

The Clayton White and Marie Stuart Company gave a novel sketch, which was billed as a "one-act album of New York snapshots," entitled "The Lady and the Cabby." The most interesting part of this was the singing of some French songs by Miss Stuart.

The work of Mabelle Adams, "the wail violinist," was marred by the inability of the orchestra to keep up with her. She made a hit, however, with her "Medley of Six."

Charles Case, the fellow who talks about his father was funny, but not as funny as usual. He is one of the big favorites at Chase's. Berthold's clever performing birds, and Pongo and Leo, aerial humorists, completed the bill.

**Comedy-Drama at the Majestic.**

"A Square Deal," a comedy-drama on Kansas politics, was presented at the Majestic yesterday before two appreciative audiences. The author lays no claim to originality of plot, but the play smacks of as much of Adels as if the father of "Fables in Slings" had written the piece himself. In fact the plot resembles Adels' "County Chairman." Even the star, Otis F. Thayer, bears a striking resemblance to the star of "The Count of Monte Cristo," Maelen Arbach.

The locale of the story is Gridley, Coffee County, Kansas, and the characters are true to life. Hannibal Hawkins is suggested as a candidate to the State senate at Topeka. David Wesley, a son of political boss, is interested in a land-grab bill. Knowing Hawkins' honesty, and realizing that if Hawkins gets the nomination he will undoubtedly get elected, he persuades him not to accept the nomination.

**WILL RECORD SPIRITS' WORDS.****Mediums While in Trance Will Talk Into Phonographs.**

Chicago, Oct. 15.—Visitors from the other world are to be asked to talk into the phonograph this week. Spiritualists from all over the United States and Canada will gather tomorrow for their fourteenth annual convention. About 500 of them will watch and take notes of the phonographic test. Considering their number and experience they think there will be little chance for the perpetration of fraud.

At least four mediums, who profess the power to deliver their bodies into the care of spirits, will speak. After they have passed into the trance state and the phonographs begin to talk the phonographs will be set going.

When the medium awakens the phonographic record will be reproduced for his benefit. In this way it is hoped that some memory of his doings in the spirit world may be recalled to the medium's mind.

**PREDICT WEATHER BY CABLE.****New System for Long Distance Reports Will Start November 1.**

A system of long distance weather reports by cable with Eastern Siberia, on the west, and Iceland on the east, will be inaugurated by the Weather Bureau November 1. The official weather map will be extended to include these points, and the barometric reports from them will have a great deal to do with the long range forecasts contemplated by Prof. Willis Moore, Chief of the Weather Bureau.

With these additions to the service already established in Western Europe, a major portion of the northern hemisphere will be covered, and Prof. Moore thinks it will be possible to predict a good week or a rainy week in advance. He expressed the opinion that this international weather service, identical with the present postal service, will be established on a co-operative plan.

**Faces Alimony Order.**

Harry J. Callahan, a clerk in the War Department, was ordered by Justice Gould, in Equity Court No. 2, yesterday, to show cause why he should not pay alimony to his wife, Mabel Callahan. Friday has been fixed as the day, when Callahan is to enter his side of the case. The petition for a divorce from bed and board, permanent alimony for maintenance, costs of counsel fees was filed in the Supreme Court yesterday. Mrs. Callahan charges cruelty, ungovernable temper, and morose disposition against her husband, making it impossible to live together. The court's order to show cause is based on this petition. The couple were married August 21, 1902, in Huntington, W. Va.

**Tested New Fire Escape.**

The Gibbs Fire Escape Company gave an exhibition of a recently invented escape at the building at 3th and D streets northwest. Four men were brought down from the fourth story in seven seconds. The police department was represented by Inspector Swindell and Capt. Williams, by whom a report of the tests will be submitted to Maj. Sylvester.

**Credit for All Washington.**

Hawkins is a free and easy-going man, who readily falls into the clever character portraits. The story is the old and simple one, built upon the maxim about the course of true love never running smooth, but its simplicity is relieved by the interpolation of many interesting incidents, particularly in the third act, where the scene is laid in "Little Hungary," the famous Bohemian resort, affording a splendid background for the most dramatic scene of the play, when Jean Van Brunt, the wily and voluble Frenchwoman with having trifled with him.

**"Custer's Last Fight" at Academy.**

The Academy was packed to the doors last night to welcome the return engagement of that stirring historical melodrama, "Custer's Last Fight." Amid thrilling situations and startling climaxes, the various members of the large cast kept the house on the qui vive. The play is full of action, for which all Hal Reid's productions are famed. Charles P. Keane got out of the role of the role of Buffalo Bill, and Miss Dorothy M. Lyons was a pleasing heroine. Decidedly the most artistic performance of the evening was given by J. Louis Ungerer, who portrayed the faithful Indian, Red Jacket. The play is given an elaborate stage setting, and the electrical effects are adequate. It provides a pleasing entertainment for men, women, and children.

**Good Burlesque at the Lyceum.**

"The Twentieth Century Maids," a clever burlesque company, sang and danced themselves into favor before two capacity audiences at the New Lyceum Theater yesterday. The two farces, "The Twentieth Century Maids' Reception" and "The Ups and Downs of the Beef Trust," were mediocre, but the staid and comeliness of the chorus redeemed them. The vaudeville offering was excellent, although there was a surplus of singing. Miss Tonia Hanlon captured the honor of the performance by her clever male impersonation. The remainder of the act specialties were furnished by Ritter and Foster, singers and dancers; Joseph K. Watson, monologue artist; Morton and Diamond, in a one-act farce, and Cornelia and Eddie, in home-making antics.

**PLAYS AND PLAYERS.**

Clay Clement and his company, after a race-breaking jump from Omaha, will present "Sam Houston" for the first time to a New York audience, at the Garden Theater to-night. Among the audience will be the former secretary of state of Texas, David Parrish Barbary, who now resides in New York, aged ninety-one, and lady, who once danced with Sam Houston, age not given.

As Deborah Kridlet in "The Shulamite," Miss Tena Ashwell, the English actress, whom the Shuberts recently brought to this country, made a very strong impression on a Chicago audience Sunday night. The story of the play deals with life in the Transvaal.

When Richard Strauss' opera "Salome" receives its first American production at the Metropolitan Grand Opera House, in New York, this season, the orchestra will have to be increased to 100, the largest number ever utilized at the Metropolitan.

At John Philip Sousa's opening concert at the New York Hippodrome Sunday night, the conductor responded to encores after every number on the program, and the encores, it need hardly be said, were Sousa compositions. A new composition, a parody called "The Tearing of the Green," given at the concert, is said to have been in the bandmaster's best vein of musical humor.

London reports say Hall Caine's "The Bondman" is drawing money into the pockets of manager and author at the rate of \$5,000 a night during its run at Drury Lane. Mrs. Patrick Campbell does not seem to be proved too great an actress for the part of Grubbs. She continues to appear in it, at any rate.

When Arthur Boucher produced "The Morals of Marcus" at the Garrick Theater, in London, in the latter part of August, he sent a classified command to the newspapers not to criticize it until it had been running a week. The newspapers absolutely ignored the play. Now Boucher has sent a humbly apologetic note to the papers, imploring a critical notice which proves again that even abuse is better for a play than deadly silence.

**THE SONG OF THE LIGHT.**

I lift my head where the blind winds spread  
And hope awake in the hearts that ache  
With the wonder of the sea;  
O, I light them home o'er the blinding foam  
I send them forth to the light.  
Mr. Farlight shines like a diamond shrine  
At the edge of the lonely night!

And down, far down through the seaweed brown  
On the shelving, white sea floor,  
Where the spent ships ride on an aimless tide  
My quivering beam lights up the dream  
Of the lonely sailor's sleep.  
Like a prayer it lies on his weary eyes  
In the endless dark of the deep.

When the sky is spread with the evening's red,  
And the sunset calls are faint;  
And my ships beat in from the wreck and din  
Of the trails of all the world;  
O, calm and strong as their own home song,  
I send the oiled ships,  
As looks the lost toward love's far goal  
And frets at life no more.

—Gertrude Pratt Dickinson.

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